

Message Text

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ACTION L-02

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R 101032Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8755

INFO USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 2858

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SHUM, TU, IZ, IR

SUBJ: TURKISH POLICY ON KURDISH REFUGEES

REF: (A) STATE 74981 (B) ANKARA 2717 (C) ANKARA 2528
(D) ANKARA 2469 (E) ANKARA 8356 OF OCTOBER 23, 1974 (NOTAL)

1. THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT'S CURRENT POLICY REGARDING KURDISH REFUGEES (I.E., TO REFUSE PERMISSION TO KURDISH GROUPS TO ENTER TURKEY EITHER FOR ASYLUM OR FOR TRANSIT TO IRAN) WAS ANNOUNCED BY THEN PRIMIN SADI IRMAK MARCH 26 (REF D). HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE THAT TURKEY IS NOT RPT NOT IN VIOLATION OF THE BASIC PROVISIONS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW REGARDING HUMAN RIGHTS AND PROTECTION OF REFUGEES AS ENUMERATED IN PARA 3, REF A. SPECIFICALLY, IN OUR CONTACTS WITH THE LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE U.N. HIGH COMMISSION FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR), OTHER DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS, AND THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, WE HAVE FOUND NO RPT NO EVIDENCE WHICH SUGGESTS THAT TURKEY HAS ENGAGED IN THE FORCEFUL REPATRIATION OF KURDISH REFUGEES INTO IRAQ.

2. THE ANKARA REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNHCR TOLD EMBOFF APRIL 8 THAT HE AND TWO COLLEAGUES FROM THE GENEVA OFFICE OF THE UNHCR
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RECENTLY MADE A DEMARCHE TO THE TURKISH MFA ON BEHALF OF THE

KURDISH REFUGEES, SEEKING PERMISSION FOR THEM TO ENTER TURKEY AT ONE OR TWO BORDER--CROSSING POINTS FOR PURPOSES OF TRANSIT TO IRAN. IN RETURN, THE UN OFFERED TO PROVIDE WHATEVER LOGISTICAL SUPPORT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO FACILITATE THE PASSAGE. HOWEVER, UNHCR REP SAID, THE TIMING OF THE DEMARCHE WAS UNPROFITOUS, SINCE THE PARLIAMENT WAS DEBATING (MARCH 27-28) THE PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF MARTIAL LAW IN FOUR PROVINCES IN EASTERN TURKEY NEAR THE IRAQI BORDER (REF C). UNHCR REP SAID HE HAD NOT RPT NOT YET RECEIVED A REPLY FROM THE TURKS, AND HE DOUBTED THAT THERE WOULD BE A FAVORABLE RESPONSE UNLESS A "MULTILATERAL" APPROACH WERE MADE TO THE GOT.

3. REGARDING A GROUP OF ROUGHLY 3500 KURDS WHO ENTERED TURKEY IN AUTUMN 1974 AND LATER RETURNED TO IRAQ (REF E), UNHCR REP SAID HE HAD SEEN "CONVINCING" EVIDENCE THAT THE GROUP INVOLVED WERE SUPPORTERS OF THE IRAQI GOVERNMENT, WHO TEMPORARILY LEFT KURDISH-CONTROLLED AREAS IN IRAQ, BUT LATER RETURNED VOLUNTARILY AFTER THE BARZANI FORCES HAD BEEN CLEARED OUT BY GOVERNMENT TROOPS.

4. ALSO, DUTCH EMBASSY TOLD US EARLIER THIS WEEK THAT HIS EMBASSY HAD SIMILARLY MADE A DEMARCHE TO THE MFA IN SUPPORT OF THE UNHCR'S EFFORTS TO GET PERMISSION FOR KURDISH REFUGEES TO TRANSIT TURKEY ENROUTE TO IRAN. HOWEVER, AN MFA OFFICER HAD REPLIED THAT PERMISSION WAS BEING DENIED ON TWO GROUNDS: (A) AFTER THE APRIL 1 EXPIRATION OF THE AMNESTY PERIOD FOR THOSE WHO WANTED TO LEAVE IRAQ, IT WAS NOT RPT NOT CLEAR WHETHER THE IRAQI GOVERNMENT WOULD PERMIT ANY MORE KURDS TO LEAVE, AND (B) WEATHER CONDITIONS IN EASTERN TURKEY MADE TRANSIT AT THE PRESENT TIME A PRACTICAL IMPOSSIBILITY.

5. COMMENT: TURKISH POLICY ON KURDISH REFUGEES COULD BECOME A POLITICAL ISSUE BETWEEN THE DEMIREL GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION PARTIES. HOWEVER, THE NEW GOVERNMENT IS NOT RPT NOT NECESSARILY COMMITTED TO MAINTAIN THE POLICY ANNOUNCED BY THE IRMAK GOVERNMENT, AND COULD PREEMPT THE ISSUE BY GIVING PERMISSION FOR KURDISH REFUGEES TO TRANSIT TURKISH TERRITORY. MEANWHILE, THE OPPOSITION REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP) HAS ISSUED A STATEMENT URGING THE GOVERNMENT TO REVISE THE DECISION TO REFUSE ENTRY TO THE KURDS

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(REF B). ALSO, RPP DEPUTY MIKAIL ILCIN (HAKKARI) HAS SENT MESSAGES TO THE TURKISH RED CRESCENT SOCIETY AND TO THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS URGING THAT RELIEF BE EXTENDED TO BARZANI FORCES WHO HAVE TAKEN SHELTER IN THE MOUNTAINOUS AREAS NEAR THE TURKISH FRONTIER. THE RPP REPORTEDLY INTENDS TO PROPOSE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE A PARLIAMENTARY MOTION FAVORING A REVISION OF THE GOT'S POLICY ON KURDISH REFUGEES.

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